Braintree League: Black Notley boost survival bid

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Two wins in a row have put Black Notley B back in the driving seat in the fight to avoid relegation from division one of the Braintree Table Tennis League.

They followed their win the previous week over Sible Hedingham by scoring an 8-2 victory over Rayne C, a result that lifts them above Notley A.

Andrew Pagett and Victor Chan were the architects of their latest success. Pagett, in his first season in the league following a brief lay-off after coming down from Loughborough University, remained undefeated for the first time.

Rayne C included two reserves, though Dave Moles and Steve Siggs are no mugs. Moles scored a win over Glen Laing, as did Keith Martin, but Pagett's 3-0 (11-5, 11-5, 11-8) win over Martin was probably the result of the night.

Notley A also faced a reserve in their encounter with Rayne A but in their case it was regular first division player Paul Lombardi.

Lombardi was unable to register a win for his temporary team-mates although he stretched Zach Harrington to 14-12 in the fifth game.

A good win for Andrew Huckson over Ian Whiteside meant that Notley A took four points, to leave themselves two adrift of their B team.

At the top, Liberal A took eight points from their own B team, although both Simon Webber and Scott Dowsett had to give second best to Adrian Pitt.

The major shock of the week was a defeat – only his third of the season – for five times men's singles champion Paul Davison at the hands of Rayne B's Hector Rogers. In straight games too, 11-9, 11-3, 11-8.

Rogers also took his other two singles and Adam Buxton one but Netts A won the rest with the help of two from Maria Boulton, playing up from the B team.

Without Boulton's help, the B team beat Sible Hedingham 7-3. James Hicks was unbeaten.

Rayne E maintained their 13-point lead over Liberal C in division two – Liberal have a match in hand – when both teams won 9-1.

Liberal may now have to do something special to take the title, but could already make a claim to that distinction. Not many teams can score a 9-1 victory against a Rayne F team that includes Dave Marsh.

Marsh lost to both Gareth Davies and Jon Fieldsend and Garry Fryatt came close to adding his name to the list, but after taking the first two games, he went down in five.

Rayne E's win over Felsted RBL B was more straightforward but it included a surprise win for Andy Laws over Dave Miller, currently seventh in the division's averages.

Steve Noble was undefeated in Notley C's 8-2 win over their own D team, for whom Sean Clift won two, while Richard Whiteside anchored Rayne D's 8-2 win over Rayne G by being the only one to beat Keith Flowers.